

Kern/Inyo/Mono Counties Implementation Grant

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B. Executive Summary

This application is submitted for all one-stop partners - current and future - in Kern, Inyo and Mono counties. This region's contribution to the development of an effective statewide system cannot be overstated. The area consists of three largely rural counties which have long been recognized as a significant economic region of the state and has a long-standing history of collaboration in workforce development.

This region currently serves as the Service Delivery Area (SDA) and Sub State Area (SSA) under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). This application is submitted via the County of Kern, Employers' Training Resource Department. It builds on a system of one-stop centers which have existed for years and which embody all major elements of the California WorkNet system envisioned by the One-Stop Career Center System Task Force. The local system in place has been targeted as one of the best in California and, with the assistance of the requested funding, would result in a world-class cornerstone for inclusion in the statewide network proposed.

While we believe the strengths of this proposal will be demonstrated throughout the narrative and exhibits, a few unique aspects will be highlighted in this summary. The system currently in place has many agencies offering the mandatory services throughout the region. Kern County currently has one of the premiere one-stops in the nation, with approximately 10 agencies offering diverse programs through on-site representatives (including all mandatory programs). Truly unique is the use of integrated job development/job placement teams with members from numerous agencies working together to provide one-stop services to employers and a vastly improved data-base of employment opportunities for job seekers. Resource centers and computer laboratories add to the universal services provided. The quality of the existing delivery system has been acknowledged by many agencies and demonstrates that this region is clearly ready to implement.

Despite the extremely high level of collaboration and existence of a world-class career center, further needs of regional residents and business create a requirement of additional funding. With the funding sought in this proposal, the one-stop concept will be shared throughout the region. We remain committed to sharing our expertise and are more than willing to participate fully in dissemination of the methods and processes developed to allow one-stop activities in many diverse locations - both urban and rural.

C. Narrative

I. Array of Services

A. Description of Services and Integration

1. Flow Charts

See D. VII.

2. Services Provided and Rationale

The Career Services Center (CSC) system offers a large array of services throughout the region. With the assistance from this grant, the number and depth of activities will increase moderately, while the access points for services will increase dramatically. Current centers offer many services on site with accessibility to others offered by on-site staff. Referrals are still made when services required are offered by partners or others at separate locations.

Specific core services now available on site to job, education, and training seekers have been determined both through an evolutionary process involving the planning efforts of the existing policy body and active planning meetings over the past three years. While limited only by available funding, the system was designed to do "whatever it takes" to enhance the employability of all job, education and training seekers.

Core services for job, education and training seekers include:

Directory of Services - A detailed, written description of services is currently available at CSCs for job seekers and employers. As the electronic infrastructure is developed, an electronic presentation will be available at each CSC, as well as outlying areas to describe the services offered by all the partners co-located at the CSC. This system can be updated whenever necessary and at minimal cost.

Self-screening for Program Eligibility - Detailed information regarding initial eligibility criteria for enrollment into various programs is presented to applicants

during daily orientation sessions. The enhanced electronic system will enable applicants to research and review specific eligibility criteria along with other pertinent program information.

Resource Referral Services - Currently, staff provide information on services and other resources available locally and may make direct referrals as needed. As the enhanced electronic system is developed, and as part of self-screening, customers will have easy access to information which will help identify any supportive service needs (i.e., transportation, child care, crisis intervention, etc.), the appropriate resource(s) to contact, and other applicable information.

Job Services/Employment Information - All of the CSCs offer "Job Search Assistance" and CSC partners have combined efforts in job development. This program, as currently operated by the CSCs, helps customers in locating, applying for, and obtaining a job through the development of resumes, work search plans and job-finding skills, as well as job development, job referrals, and job clubs. Professional job developers and placement specialists are available to customers throughout their enrollment period to provide both small group and one-on-one counseling.

Labor Market Information - Employers' Training Resource (Job Training Partnership Act services) annually researches and compiles local information on occupational wages and supply/demand information and publishes the results. Customers at the CSCs have access to this and other labor market information through the ERISS system, the Internet, EDD (as part of the California Cooperative Occupational Information System, the Dunn & Bradstreet database, and several other resources which help customers identify geographic and occupational areas of potential growth or decline and individual career information.

Intake/Assessment - The current system includes a "generic" intake form to address the initial

eligibility criteria, including ability to benefit, for multiple agencies, including JTPA, GAIN and EDD. Applicants attend orientations where additional information is provided regarding available services. Applicants then receive one-on-one counseling regarding their employability needs as well as their progress toward achievement of their occupational goals. The CSC partners propose to install a software package which can accommodate the internal needs of the various agencies and programs, including multi-site and agency connectivity, common intake and interface that can be used by multiple agencies, custom screens and interfaces for specific agencies, comprehensive information and referral features, advanced security and privacy safeguards, cross-program eligibility screening and a universal data system that can transfer existing data, uses multiple coding systems (e.g., DOT, OES, CIP, SIC), and adjusts data to the formats of varied programs.

Integrated Services Orientation - Current efforts include cross-training staff, written informational materials and various assessment instruments. A professionally produced video and/or multimedia presentation will be used to conduct orientation sessions for customers at CSCs. The video would provide complete information concerning all the agencies and services available. Each orientation session would then be standardized, providing customers with the same information each session. The video presentation will make the services and resources of the diverse institutions represented appear as one system to clients, employers and agency staffs. This will also meet our enhancement goal of providing high quality services in many remote locations.

Initial Screening and Coordination System for the Next Level - Currently, intake workers and case managers ensure that customers are informed of other services or programs available and are referred to appropriate activities and community resources. Experience has indicated that the task of storing,

retrieving and sharing client data and the services available at the CSC is complex, costly, and time-consuming. A service integration and client management system is necessary to support the concept of one-stop shopping. A tool which provides direct electronic linkage among social services agencies, education and training providers, and providers of support services is essential to the operation of a true one-stop system. The CSC partners will implement a system which will enable all agencies to coordinate services to customers, and monitor customers' progress and employment status. The system will provide a common link organized around the universal customer service stages of intake, assessment, placement and referral, and follow up.

Unemployment Insurance - The local EDD is co-located at some CSCs; therefore, customers are able to file initial claims for unemployment insurance, as well as access the other services available through EDD. As EDD transitions to telephone claim filing, even the most remote sites will be able to assist applicants in this process.

Core services for employers include:

Directory of Services - Current efforts include detailed printed information materials. As more placement efforts are combined with CSC partners, information will be updated and supplemented with on-line menus via the Internet.

Resource Referral Services - All CSC staff have available information on how to access local business assistance and incentives. Marketing in various media ensure ongoing awareness of existing services and information. Efforts continue to link one-stop efforts with economic development and small business development efforts. Strong coordination results in referrals both to and from other agencies serving business.

Job Applicant Data Base - Customers are currently entered into EDD's job match system and EDD's CALJobs Internet-based job match system. This enables employers to match their specifications with job applicants' skills and occupational goals. Use of EDD's job match system will continue and expand as resources increase within our one-stop system. On-line telephone banks will also be used. Automated systems will supplement our most successful personal efforts performed by many employees.

Labor Market Information - ETR publishes labor market information as part of the California Cooperative Occupational Information System, and makes it available yearly to all individuals with a need or interest in that information. Special surveys are also done on request by business or trade organizations. Various other related information is also made available at our one-stop resource centers.

Economic Development - The CSC currently provides information on basic incentives and tax credits, and also maintains linkages with area Chambers of Commerce and the Kern Economic Development Corporation, whose president serves on the local one-stop policy board, as well as other entities responsible for regulating, promoting or assisting in local economic development. Several staff have been designated to participate in local planning efforts, with special emphasis on Incentive Areas and Enterprise Zones.

Rapid Response and Plant Closure Assistance - The CSC offers Rapid Response Assistance to businesses affected by closures and/or layoffs. The local EDD office informs ETR and CSC partners of businesses that have filed WARN notices or that have laid off significant numbers of employees. The CSC then dispatches its designated Rapid Response Representatives to initiate appropriate services for affected employees.

Customized services for job, education and training seekers and employers:

In order to meet the individualized needs of our customers, the partners within the CSCs work closely with one another to ensure that customers receive necessary and appropriate assistance and are referred to other community agencies for services, if required. A system is already in place at the CSCs to help customers who need supportive services (i.e., child care, transportation, temporary shelter, etc.) in order to complete training and/or during job search activities. Additionally, the comprehensive assessment process enables staff to identify customers' specific occupational goals and needs, and to follow through by offering a variety of programs and services provided through the CSCs. During the 1997-98 program year, ETR will implement a pilot program which includes the use of "training vouchers." Based on assessment results and other specific criteria, a limited number of customers will be offered a larger variety of training programs from which to choose. Staff at our CSCs also assist individual businesses in meeting their unique recruitment and job placement needs through use of EDD's job match system and through assessment activities and consultation with employers and job seekers. Electronic expansion of data bases and services will enhance our ability to meet our customers' individual needs.

3. Marketing and Outreach Plans

The Career Services Center (CSC) partners have formed a marketing subcommittee and designated staff responsible for marketing and outreach. The subcommittee works closely with the CSC partners to develop and implement marketing strategies to promote the CSC and ensure that customer service remains the focus and guiding influence of all marketing efforts. The Employers' Training Resource (ETR) Marketing Department, comprised of a unit supervisor, a publications specialist and a word processing technician, generates the concepts, production and implementation of the overall

promotion, public relations and media coordination for the CSC. Numerous marketing avenues are incorporated into the program, including the following:

- logo, business card, letterhead and signage design;
- generation of informational and fact sheets, pamphlets, brochures, presentation and media packets, and promotional print material related to all CSC activities;
- television and radio commercials;
- various newspaper, magazine, program and event print advertisements;
- t-shirt design;
- all collateral identity material design and production.

In addition, ETR staff coordinates all CSC tours, including design and production of presentation materials, and media coordination, when appropriate. The CSC currently averages three to six tours and presentations a month and can accommodate a variety of needs, from a one-hour, single person visit to large groups or visits which require multi-staff presentations from CSC partners and a comprehensive media press conference. Examples of tours and presentations that have been conducted include:

- Governor Wilson's telephone press conference led by Assemblyman Roy Ashburn and key business and community leaders;
- Sandra Smoley RN, Secretary of State Health and Welfare Agency;
- Kern County Board of Supervisors;
- EDD regional representatives including various managers, trainers and staff of all levels;
- California State Department of Rehabilitation regional representatives, including managers;
- Private Industry Council representatives from Oakland, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Tulare, Stanislaus, San Luis Obispo, Modesto, Merced, Madera and Hanford;
- Regional Private Industry Council coordinators from EDD - Orange County and San Diego.

As a member of the nationally recognized Enterprise Council and their Marketing Committee, ETR extends assistance and advice, upon request, to national and

California job training agencies regarding the CSC marketing program. We have also been requested to present marketing workshops at national and state conferences, including the recently held One-Stop National Conference in Los Angeles, CA.

One of the successes of the marketing strategies was the CSC's nomination and "submittal and display presentation" for the Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce's "Beautiful Bakersfield Award" competition. We were selected as the winner of the "Government Agency - Best Use of Government Funds to Enhance the Quality of Life in Our Community" category for the consolidation and coordination efforts in establishing the "One-Stop" Career Services Center Consolidation Program.

Numerous articles and television/radio presentations have been presented to the public and published in the media, with the input and coordination of the CSC marketing subcommittee. We have provided backgrounds, affirmation testimonials, program specifics, statistics, current information and plans regarding the CSC system.

Grant funds will be used to expand our marketing strategies to the outlying areas of Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties. These strategies will include information on services in outlying areas, television and radio commercials and presentation packets on the one-stop system.

The marketing unit can coordinate special events which promote the CSC. These special events may include:

- Annual Jobs Telethon - a live, two-hour television production involving the coordination of CSC partners and their staff, Employers' Training Resource (ETR) subcontractors, and customers (employers and job, education and training seekers) with local television and radio stations;
- Community Outreach - ongoing efforts to disseminate information about services offered at the CSC. Opportunities to achieve these goals are the Kern County Fair where an exhibit booth provides CSC partners with the opportunity to promote the services available

at all CSC locations. Informational literature, a video and promotional items will be made available to all customers. Additionally, CSC staff are designated to extend marketing efforts by attending and participating in numerous business shows, local street fairs, chambers of commerce events, neighborhood information fairs, conferences, seminars, job fairs, workshops, festivals, and other activities.

B. Universal Information Access

One of the primary goals of the Career Services Center is to support informed choice and to ensure that customers have universal access to information and services. One of the ways this will be accomplished is by providing more access points to the diverse population of this expansive geographic region. Through increased electronic linkages, many remote sites will provide access to information on services (including core services) available, training opportunities, job openings, labor market information and industry trends. Specific methods available to customers include the use of Internet, dedicated touch-screen personal computers, self-contained kiosks, cross-trained staff, orientation videos, multi-media computer presentations, and other systems maintained by each partner. Access sites for kiosks and computers will include additional one-stop centers, libraries, schools, county welfare offices and community centers. The Career Services Center partnership plans to further develop a web page on the Internet to describe a directory of services, eligibility requirements, labor market information and links to other relevant sites.

Secondly, marketing efforts will emphasize the availability of the information and the location of access points. Information will also be made available on the performance of training providers and job prospects to provide customers informed choices on education and training providers.

Additionally, information for employers, researchers, students and other interested parties will also be made available through the above-referenced methods. This information will include links to other one-stops, CALJobs, economic development agencies, county agencies,

community colleges, universities and State of California sites such as the Department of Finance, the Department of Commerce and the Employment Development Department.

C. Continuous Improvement Strategies

The following strategies will be used to continually refine and improve services in response to customer feedback for both job, education, and training seekers and employer customers. Members of the local one-stop partnership have been working together to meet performance objectives of each program and fully implement the vision of fully functioning one-stops. To achieve this goal, a number of information systems, tracking systems and customer satisfaction tools were developed. Currently in use, these provide ongoing data for analysis and program improvement. Customer satisfaction goals for both employers and job seekers were established by the Career Services Center (CSC) Steering Committee and work groups.

Most of the CSC partners have participated in continuous improvement systems through their "parent" agencies. Systems such as Total Quality Management have been used for years. After careful analysis of many available systems, the processes identified and developed as Simply Better! are now being implemented. As a member of the Enterprise Council, the CSC partners have additional technical resources available. Specific tools in the Simply Better! process include self-evaluation instruments, customer satisfaction surveys, focus groups and analysis methods. Other strategies proposed are to use retired business volunteers to assist in obtaining feedback from employers and employer groups. Feedback from these systems will be used to continuously refine and improve our services. The U.S. Department of Labor is currently considering Kern, Inyo and Mono counties as a site for a Simply Better! Quality Laboratory. If approved, the regional efforts will be shared with other agencies.

II. Array of Partners and Extent of Collaboration

A. Partners and Contributions

The Career Services Centers in this region have all the mandatory partners and others in one location and through electronic linkages. These partners include: ETR (JTPA services for adults, dislocated workers and youth), EDD (Job Service, migrant and seasonal farmworker programs, Unemployment Insurance, Veteran's employment service), Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (senior community service employment, job training and supportive services), Kern High School District (school-to-career activities), local Human Services Department (GAIN, welfare), California Department of Rehabilitation, Employ America (disabilities), county Mental Health, Bakersfield College (community college).

Each local partner adds value to the total Career Services Center system. After two and one-half years experience, many specific contributions can be seen at the major one-stops in Bakersfield. Of no less importance to the system are the many partners throughout the counties which may provide space for an electronic access point or commit to list all job openings with the one-stop partnership.

The largest contributions monetarily have come from Employers' Training Resource using Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funding. Each year approximately \$3,000,000 is spent on intake, assessment and job placement staff located in the one-stops. JTPA Title III grant funds assisted in start-up costs. Grant funds were used to provide desks, chairs, computers, resource materials and supplies. This contribution amounted to approximately \$500,000. Staff and JTPA-related costs will continue to be funded at the rate of \$3-4,000,000 per year.

The Employment Development Department provides access to Job Match and CALJobs systems, placement staff including Veteran's outreach and Native American services, and supervision. These resources are estimated at \$300,000 per year in support of four current one-stops.

The Kern County Human Services Department provides staff for job development, job placement and supervision. These are estimated at \$300,000 per year. Placement and job development are also provided by the State Department of Rehabilitation, Kern County Mental Health, and Bakersfield Adult School at a total cost of approximately \$100,000 per year. Informational access, services, assessment and career counseling are provided by Bakersfield, College, Mexican American Opportunity Foundation and Foster Assessment.

As the Career Services Center system is expanded in this vast region, many more partners will join our efforts. Major partners now considering joining or expanding in existing centers include the California State University-Bakersfield, Inyo County Office of Education, Employment Development Department and others. The system design will easily allow for this expansion. Appropriate sites for electronic access will include both multiple sites for existing partners and new sites as yet to be determined.

Each partner will continue to seek funding to carry out both their own statutory requirements and the actions required of the one-stop system. Under broad policy of the local one-stop Board of Directors, funds will be sought while ensuring that all operations remain cost-effective and provide a positive "return-on-investment."

B. Functional Integration

The partners of the Career Services Center (CSC) have made significant efforts to integrate functions including shared administrative arrangements, coordinated job development and placement, and sharing customer information.

In an effort to bring the benefits of one-stop services to the business community and to increase job placements for job seekers, the partnership has taken major steps in combining job development and placement functions. These efforts were led by the County of Kern Board of Supervisors through the County Administrative Office. Accomplishing this integration required conceptual agreement by management of the affected agencies and a series of meetings spanning several months. Participating in

the planning process were staff of Employers' Training Resource (JTPA), Human Services Department (welfare, GAIN, TANF), Employment Development Department (Job Service and veterans), Department of Rehabilitation, Mental Health Department, Bakersfield Adult School and County Administrative Office (group facilitation). Starting with a blueprint for the "ideal" system, staff worked through dozens of issues and regulatory restrictions. Primary goals were to eliminate duplication, provide a single contact for employers, share job orders, and increase the placement potential for all job seekers.

During November 1996, additional job development and placement staff from the above agencies began co-locating at the Stockdale CSC. A computerized job match system was critical to ensure the sharing of job orders with the CSC partners, and to match job seekers to the jobs. After reviewing systems currently used by the partners and other job match systems available commercially, the partnership agreed to test EDD's California Job Openings Browse System (CALJobs) as the major software system for a job match system. Still operating as a pilot, this system provides for an Internet-based method of sharing job orders and a self-service browse function for job seekers. This system is supplemented with a database developed by ETR to provide tracking of job openings, referrals and placements. It also is used as an employer contact management system to track contacts made to employers.

Current staffing is provided by each of the agencies mentioned above. At the Stockdale CSC, two inter-agency teams of job developers and placement staff work together to obtain job orders and match job seekers to jobs available. One team is supervised by a Human Services employee and the other by an ETR employee. With a total of 14 full-time and nine part-time staff, six are assigned as "pure job developers" who only work with employers to obtain job orders. Placement staffs on these teams screen clients as requested by the employer, and keep track of referrals and outcomes. Other placement staffs at the various locations of the nine partner agencies also screen clients and make referrals from

the computerized CALJobs system. On a part-time basis a management employee (currently an EDD manager) serves as a liaison between the teams and partners of the CSC Steering Committee, also made up of representatives of the participating agencies. Two full-time and one part-time clerical staffs are shared by the partnership at this center. Memoranda of Understanding between the CSC partners outline responsibilities and costs borne by each partner agency. Costs include the sharing of clerical staff, equipment and office space.

While just now becoming fully operational, the teams have been able to secure hundreds of job orders in a short period of time. Referrals and placements are being achieved, even as staff continues to devote significant time to cross-training and other training in the new system.

The CSC partners also worked together over several meetings to develop a "universal" application for job, education and training seekers which covers information needed by the agencies. Currently, this is completed on a form and the plan is to have this information on an automated system accessible by all partners at their various locations. The marketing strategies also reflect an integrated concept as far as the customer is concerned which is described in more detail above.

The CSC would like to implement other integrated processes with additional funding in the areas of more cross-training of partners' staffs in the one-stop system, common intake/assessment processes throughout the system, and expand and enhance locally standardized information and referral.

C. Policy Development and Implementation Process

The local one-stop policy board will be the primary platform for developing policies and recommendations for the Career Services Centers (CSCs). The Board currently has a private sector majority as well as representatives from labor, education and other stakeholders in the one-stop system. The CSC Steering Committee will provide policy and other recommendations related to the operations of the one-stop system to the one-stop Policy Board.

The CSC Steering Committee, established under a memorandum of understanding, has representatives from all partner agencies including the mandatory partners. The Committee also represents management staff and supervisors from the partner agencies and front-line supervisors of the one-stop centers. Recently, employer representatives were solicited and added to the Committee membership to provide input on the one-stop system. This Committee was established in the summer of 1995 and meets monthly to discuss policies, strategies, and recommendations for changes and improvements related to the operations of the one-stop center. The Committee also provided input and recommendations for this one-stop grant application. Responsibility for preparation of the agenda and minutes, and the facilitation of the Committee meetings will be rotated among the CSC partners.

Other subcommittees and work groups, represented by the CSC partners, have been formed to provide input in marketing the one-stop, staff capacity building, and customer satisfaction. In addition, front-line staff and supervisors meet regularly to discuss recommendations to continuously improve the one-stop processes, and this input is shared at the Committee meetings. CSC partners also seek input from employer advisory councils and chambers of commerce.

It is proposed that policies approved by the Committee and the one-stop Board will be compiled in a manual and distributed to all one-stop partners. Other agreements will also be developed to further clarify the roles and responsibilities of the partners and the Board.

D. Capacity Building and Cross-Training

Capacity building, cross-training, and technical training goals of the one-stop were established by our Career Services Center (CSC) Employment Services Task Force, which was representative of all the partner agencies. Key capacity training modules identified as essential for the successful implementation and operation of a seamless system included the following: team building, facilitation of small groups, conflict resolution, dealing with change, leadership, customer service, communication and presentation skills, Total Quality Management

(TQM), consensus building (for supervisors), performance management (for supervisors), morale building, and others. Cross-training efforts also considered essential included instruction in the following: various programs' eligibility, referral processes, reporting requirements, job development/placement/order procedures, automated systems (i.e., telephone, computer software, duplicating equipment, fax), and overviews of services offered. Technical training which has been provided to all partners this year includes CALJobs training (through EDD); On-the-Job Training procedures, Job Development and Placement Strategies, and Tax Credit Incentives instruction (through Employers' Training Resource JTPA staff); Alternative Work Experience [AWEX] (through GAIN staff); and Windmills (through Department of Rehabilitation staff).

While several capacity building sessions (Resume Preparation, Violence in the Workplace, and Dealing with Change), most cross-training, and all technical training have been performed at our CSC by partner staff or outside agencies (such as the Employment Training Network), it is recognized that continuous training is vital in maintaining the efficiency of any one-stop, especially when the one-stop concept is expanded to other sites in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties. Expanded training to include any new partners and local priorities is planned, as well as additional capacity building to meet the unique cultural and geographic needs of each area. Other capacity building sessions under consideration which are currently offered through Bakersfield College's Center for Professional Development include the following: effective meeting skills, intercultural communication, process improvement, creative problem solving, and handling difficult people.

We are aware that competencies for one-stop staff were included in the publication "Recommended Front-Line Staff Competencies for One-Stop Centers in California," which was developed by the One-Stop Competencies Work Group. Elements of this publication have been reviewed and will be shared with staff as a continuous improvement tool.

III.Regional Approach

A. Rationale for Region Selection

The Kern, Inyo and Mono region defined in this proposal, although long used by many entities, was determined through an involved series of discussions, meetings, and statistical analysis. It is consistent with investment zones identified by the One-Stop Career Center Task Force and with planning zones determined by the California Economic Strategy Council. Please see map, Exhibit D.
III.

During the last few months, staff from Employers' Training Resource (ETR) and local Employment Development Department (EDD) field offices met extensively with representatives of other San Joaquin Valley agencies. Several regional configurations were considered to provide service to a larger geographical region. Throughout this process we sought to develop a regional approach which would be a workable long-term approach and not a region defined for purposes of this proposal. Throughout this process it was determined that various counties throughout the valley, which share many common demographic and economic similarities, were not yet at the same "implementation" stage as the region defined in this proposal. Furthermore, despite the common factors, most valley areas were too far apart to realistically comprise a single region for purposes of program delivery.

While crossing lines between Investment Zone 7 and Zone 9, the defined region offers the opportunity to serve vast geographic areas with similar needs. This configuration of counties is the same as is currently in place for delivery of services under the Job Training Partnership Act. A regional policy board currently serves the same area: the One-Stop Policy Board (Employers' Training Resource Board of Directors). This tri-county area is also served by the Kern Community College District which operates three community colleges and multiple outreach centers. The Central Labor Council and the Building and Construction Trades Council serve the same area. The same EDD Acting Regional Director and local EDD Area Analyst represents the Job Service and Unemployment Insurance, and the EDD Labor Market Information Division (LMID), respectively, in these three counties.

Areas of similarity also include geology, industrial make-up, and population characteristics. While Kern County occupies the southernmost portion of the central valley, the three counties include the east side of the Sierra Nevada range and large portions of the Mojave Desert. Residents of Inyo and Mono counties typically seek goods and services in this region, with roads to the west often closed for long periods during winter months. Many population centers are very small and would greatly benefit from the electronic connectivity which is planned for this one-stop system.

B. Linkage Between Regional Initiatives

Employers' Training Resource (ETR) provides services mandated by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) through the Career Services Center (CSC) and has been an integral participant of local School-to-Career and Welfare Reform committees and issues. As one of the lead agencies of the Kern County School-to-Career Partnership, ETR has been selected as the fiscal agent if awarded State or Federal School-to-Career grants. The ETR Director is a member of the Kern County School-to-Career Executive Committee and several ETR staff are members of the local School-to-Career Steering Committee. The former Director of ETR had also been appointed to the State School-to-Career Task Force by the Governor.

The existing CSCs will serve as the School-to-Career base and will electronically link labor market information to schools and other centers. Currently, Kern High School District staff are co-located at one of the CSCs and serve as a School-to-Career link with the one-stop. The further development of multiple locations for career information exchange will offer efficient coordination among students, educators, parents, and employers. The centers will be located throughout the region, and will provide a school-to-business connection. The CSC will serve as a central resource for equitable utilization of services made available by private business to K-12 schools (e.g., speakers, field trips to job sites, etc.). The co-location of staff will allow for the sharing of information and resources to provide a unified, accessible service for youth and employers that is cost effective and efficient. The centers will also provide a greater opportunity to develop and maintain work-based learning, school-based learning, and connecting activities for all youth.

The CSC partners are a critical link regarding welfare reform. The ETR Director participates on the Governor's Welfare-to-Work Job Action Team, as well as the local Business Works Advisory Committee initiated by the local welfare department. The local EDD manager also serves on the local committee. Additionally, the Director of the Kern County Department of Human Services participates in committees at the State level on welfare reform and is a representative of the One-Stop Policy Board. These linkages have kept the one-stop partners well-informed and involved with both the State and local initiative regarding Welfare-to-Work. As a Service Delivery Area (SDA), ETR has long been involved with providing services to welfare recipients through referrals by the Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) program, as well as individuals receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). In keeping with State and local initiatives, the CSC partners have been working towards integrating local welfare-to-work services into local workforce preparation services, rather than operating independent or duplicative systems. One strategy being implemented locally is the coordination and consolidation of job development activities among those agencies primarily responsible for moving welfare recipients into jobs. Another strategy is to increase job matching activities to be more efficient, to reach larger audiences and utilize state-of-the-art technology. Consistent with the strategy, ETR is collaborating with La Cooperativa Campesina de California on two proposals that would complement and leverage funding of this grant application. As a member of La Cooperativa (the California association of JTPA Title IV 402 Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker grantees), ETR would receive additional monies should those proposals be successful. One proposal is the Virtual One-Stop Center which would introduce computer network technology to remote and rural field offices in an effort to improve services available to California's migrant and seasonal farmworkers and Native Americans. The second proposal is the San Joaquin Valley Welfare-to-Work Pilot Project. This project is targeted at the JTPA Title III long-term unemployed in counties located in the San Joaquin Valley, which would provide comprehensive employment and training activities to welfare recipients who did not receive employment through the Jobs First initiative. ETR works closely with various agencies, employers and other segments of the community to identify specific barriers that inhibit the flexibility of local providers and employers to increase the collaboration among workforce preparation

providers. To be user-friendly, the system must standardize, simplify and reduce paperwork to a minimum. The goals are to provide welfare recipients with a greater chance to gain work and to provide employers with the qualified workforce needed to compete in the global economy.

Economic development must be supported by workforce preparation programs through partnerships. ETR maintains those partnerships with employers, labor, training providers, education, community-based organizations and government. ETR was, and remains, a major partner in the successful applications of the three Enterprise Zones and Empowerment Zones in this area. The CSCs, the Kern Economic Development Corporation (KEDC) and the Kern County Council on Competitiveness (KCCC) work very closely to attract and retain businesses in Kern County through incentives and reducing employer impediments. The president of the KEDC also is a member of the One-Stop Policy Board and provides valuable input regarding job growth and appropriate training activities.

The one-stop system will provide multiple points of contact in a coordinated effort for workforce preparation, welfare-to-work services, and school-to-work activities. It is through the one-stop system that a customer focused, collaborative system of employment, training and education programs and services will be delivered.

C. One-Stop Impact on Economic Development and Services

The proposed one-stop system will support or improve economic development and services to customers in the following ways. Because the availability of an adequate labor force is often cited as the primary issue in attracting and retaining business, the proposed system will meet employers' labor needs by identifying, training, recruiting, and referring potential employees and education and training systems for professional development. Locally, economic development efforts through the Career Services Center (CSC) have included the marketing of the CSCs to job, education and training seekers and employers. Additionally, one-stop staffs participate in activities of many chambers of commerce and economic development organizations within the defined region. One-stop staffs also work closely with economic development agencies to assist in the recruitment of new

businesses and retention and expansion of existing businesses.

Additionally, the need to reform the workforce preparation system in California was a major theme of Collaborations to Compete in the New Economy, published by the California Economic Strategy Panel. The suggested policy framework is embodied by the system described in this proposal. A single point of contact for employers is an asset easily added to economic development materials and serves as an aid in attracting and retaining business. Each of several areas cited for change is included in this system to serve this region. Key attributes - facilitative, customer driven, flexible, agile, decentralized - are built into the local system, as recommended by the Panel.

Benefits to the business community are one of the proposed system's greatest strengths. Going far beyond the simple co-location concept of most other centers, we have combined one-stop staffs into job development/placement teams to create a single access point for employers to recruit qualified candidates from a variety of programs. Additional resources include improved interviewing facilities and access to labor market information. With additional funding, the CSC plans to expand on the availability of local labor market information. Potential employees can be screened for eligibility for employer tax incentives available in the three Enterprise Zones in this region. Goals for this project include expanding and enhancing the one-stop center concept to the Enterprise Zones in Delano, Shafter and Southeast Bakersfield.

Improvements to services provided to job, education and training seekers are described throughout this narrative. These will be most apparent in outlying and rural areas of the defined region. A full range of information will be available in remote sites, including the ability to electronically access information about jobs throughout the region. Information about services in other regions, including the State of Nevada, will be included when possible. This will be especially helpful for the rural areas of Mono and Inyo counties.

D. Processes to Adapt to Change

The following processes and systems are in place to effectively respond to changes in the region's economy. Regular contact is maintained with community networks, chambers of commerce, and business groups to help identify business needs. As a "local partner" for the California Cooperative Occupational Information System, a detailed labor market analysis is conducted annually and published for the three-county region. Internet access is provided for staff (as well as customers) to research changing needs and conditions in industry, local/regional economies, and job markets. Primary one-stop partners also have business advisory groups to identify changing needs.

As changes are identified, the system can adapt quickly. Information systems about programs and services will be in an electronic format which can be changed and disseminated quickly. All electronic connections utilize standard technology and protocols to allow processing of future information. The local policy body regularly reviews performance and other input and will make adjustments to staffing when appropriate. Changes in implementing legislation are anticipated, and the open system proposed may be adapted to pursue new initiatives or block grant funding.

Systems are especially sensitive to changing needs of major employers. When layoffs occur with larger employers, a Rapid Response team comprised of one-stop partners will make onsite contact and work with both labor and management. Dislocated workers are offered the full range of activities from the partner agencies. In the case of new or expanding businesses, staff participate with economic development efforts at the earliest stages. Employers are presented with information on one-stop services, which include recruitment and applicant screening, job applicant data bank and customized training to meet their needs. The availability of integrated placement functions is especially attractive to new employers.

IV. Demonstration of Readiness

A. Implementation Steps to Date

Efforts to build and implement an effective one-stop delivery system for workforce development began several years ago in Kern County. Guided by proposed new legislation to consolidate multiple funding sources and aided by long-standing local cooperation, Employers' Training Resource (ETR) took the lead in this effort.

In order to promote the new one-stop system to the public and potential partners, a new name was identified for the local system: Career Services Center (CSC). Initial planning efforts took place with the California Employment Development Department (EDD) and service providers funded by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). JTPA funding was received (\$400,000) under Title III to assist with some start-up costs for the first model one-stop, located on Stockdale Highway in Bakersfield. The CSC opened in late 1994, and a grand opening followed in May of 1995.

The Stockdale CSC was designed to offer diverse services to both job seekers and employers. In addition to the obvious offices and cubicles to house staff, rooms were dedicated for customer telephones, job search classes, personal computer training rooms, conference rooms and a break room for use by both staff and customers. A resource room provided space for computers and research materials for job seekers. Resources included personal computers connected to the Internet, computerized labor market information, out-of-town newspapers, employer data-bases and a library of written materials.

Initial staffing was comprised of JTPA-funded staff and employees of the Employment Development Department (EDD). The Kern High School District offered programs targeted to youth, with an emphasis on school-to-career activities. Soon more partners were added, including California Department of Rehabilitation, Human Services Department (GAIN or JOBS), Bakersfield College, Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (Title IV - National Senior Aides program and supportive services), Employ America, and Kern County Department of Mental Health.

In the fall of 1996, the CSC partners formed the Employment Services Task Force to further develop a centralized and integrated job placement division.

Starting with a blueprint for the "ideal" system, staff worked through dozens of issues and regulatory restrictions. Primary goals were to eliminate duplication of effort, provide one-stop shopping for employers, distribute job listings equitably, and increase placement potential for all partners.

During November 1996, staff began co-locating at the Stockdale CSC. Decisions were made to use EDD's Job California Opening Browse System (CAL Jobs) as the major software package to list job orders for all agencies to share. Still in its infancy, this system provides for an Internet-based method of sharing job orders and a self-service browse function for job seekers. This system is supplemented with a data base developed by ETR to provide tracking of openings and referrals.

B. Barriers and Solutions

Various barriers to local system building, implementation and operation have been realized with the opening of our Career Services Center (CSC). Because of separate funding grants, regulations, and goals for each partner, it was, and continues to be, quite a challenge to coordinate services under one roof. Local staff have proved flexible, creative, and cooperative in dealing with some obstacles such as office layout, job functions, work hours, supervision, and vacation scheduling. However, more serious problems such as lack of funding; varying performance standards, eligibility requirements, participation rules, and placement styles; lack of integrated computer systems for job match, intake, case management and assessment; inconsistencies in definitions and terminology; incomplete electronic communication; and multiple/duplicative tracking systems continue to be challenges to staff.

To eliminate the manual tracking of clients used initially when the CSC opened, staff developed a computerized system for tracking job orders, placements, and employer contacts. However, because of the different data-bases and computer applications utilized by each of the partners, some duplication of effort still remains. Additionally, two interagency teams were formed to coordinate staff duties and functions, as well as personnel issues. Memoranda of Understanding between partners were developed to assist in outlining the responsibilities and costs borne by each agency. Common definitions were agreed upon by the partners, as well as

common goals and needs. Each staff member was provided information about the CSC partners and their services to build an awareness and understanding of their fellow CSC employees.

C. One-Stop Policy Body

The three-county region will use the Employers' Training Resource (ETR) Board of Directors (Board) for its One-Stop Policy Body. This Board has been in place for the last 14 years and meets the specifications from the One-Stop Vision. With members appointed by the Chief Local Elected Official, the Board has a private-sector majority and has representatives of most mandatory partners. Included partners are the Kern County Human Services (Welfare) Department, the Employment Development Department (EDD), the Kern County Economic Development Corporation, Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) director, State Department of Rehabilitation, labor organizations and education.

This Board was originally formed in 1983 to serve as the Private Industry Council under JTPA. In this capacity, members have participated in planning, oversight and policy decisions for many years. Through their leadership, the local one-stop system was initiated three years ago. This Board has in place an agreement with the elected officials of each county in the region.

In order to fully consider all input into operations at the Career Services Centers (CSCs), the Board will revise its bylaws, as necessary. The existing CSC Steering Committee, including representatives of staff and management of each partner, will provide input through the Board. Existing Board committees, including the Planning Committee and Oversight Committee, will be available to offer guidance and ensure the implementation and success of WorkNet.

Although this Board serves as the Private Industry Council for Kern, Inyo and Mono counties, it is not incorporated, does not employ its own staff and does not directly operate one-stops.

D. Performance Measures and Quality Assurance

Employment outcomes will be assessed based on the specific needs of each of the Career Services Center (CSC) partners. Currently, job openings, job placements, and job openings filled are tracked for the one-stop system as a whole and for the partner agencies individually. This information is disseminated on a monthly basis. In addition, separate tracking systems are utilized by each of the partnering agencies to comply with reporting requirements unique for each partner and to ensure reliability of the data. For instance, the JTPA partner is evaluated on entered employment rates and wages, and retention rates and wages. Training-related placements are evaluated as well. An integrated computerized system has been developed to track job orders and placements of all the partners. The database also serves as an employer contact management system. It is anticipated that the use of the system will be expanded to all the partners in all the CSC localities.

Learning outcomes are evaluated based on the attainment of skills by the clients. Clients at the CSC have access to programs which provide basic skills, occupational skills, employment-related skills, job specific skills, pre-employment/work maturity skills, advancement in training or education, and certification skills. Data regarding skills attainment is included in each partners' data-base and client files. It is anticipated that one computerized system can be developed to allow for the permanent and reliable tracking of learning outcomes for all clients.

Customer satisfaction surveys are utilized to provide a means to measure the quality of service provided to the various customers (employers and clients) of the CSC. Continuous improvement of this system is required to maintain the quality and integrity of the one-stop and to ensure that the one-stop is truly meeting the needs of the community. In the future, the one-stop intends to use a formal customer satisfaction package which would measure the degree to which satisfaction, objectives and needs were met for both the customer and the employer. The survey would be expanded for use at all one-stop localities.

Cost and service effectiveness of our one-stop was recognized recently with an award for the "Best Use of Public Funds" sponsored by the Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce. The co-location of several partners in one

site has demonstrated that agencies can combine and share resources to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of its customers. Data on the savings in cost, time, and staff may be collected by the administration departments of each of the partners and tabulated into a report on a yearly basis.

Customer access is measured through the extent in which we open up the services of the one-stop to serve the entire community. Diverse populations are served by the various CSC partners and data on each customer served is included in each of the partners' data-base. It is anticipated in the future that a universal data-base will be developed to compile reports on all customers and how they access services.

E. Timeline for Key Accomplishments

<u>Task</u>	<u>Estimated Completion Date</u>
Conduct planning sessions in outlying areas	September 1997
Update web pages to include three-county region	November 1997
Pilot use of kiosk in three sites	December 1997
Open Comprehensive one-stop in Bishop, CA	March 1998
Install PC's and kiosks in all areas	June 1998
Expand one-stop center system to outlying areas of Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties	June 1998
Attend state level planning sessions	Ongoing
Provide tours of facilities	Ongoing
Conduct training sessions for other sites	Ongoing
Develop one-stop policies manual and partner agreements for distribution to one-stop partners and update as needed	Ongoing

F. Use of Technology

The career centers in Bakersfield have long utilized advanced technology in delivering services and information. Examples include Internet access for staff and customers, a wide-area-network connecting offices, computerized assessment systems, computer laboratories to teach skills, and electronic mail capability.

Network administrators are employed to oversee the use of our network and facilitate their expansion. As requested in the introduction to the rating criteria, we have prepared a response to the rating criteria for Technology Capacity Grants. Please see Section D.VI. in the appendix.

G. Separation of Duties

As noted in IV. C. above, the local one-stop policy body does not directly employ staff or operate one-stops. Although it does receive limited staff support from the Administrative Division of Employers' Training Resource, this division does not operate programs of any kind. The decision to utilize this policy body was made with input from all partner agencies and agreed to by both the existing policy body and the Chief Local Elected Official.